

Title. Enhancement of Homeland Security: The Need for an Immediate Comprehensive Assessment of Veterinary Accreditation Training at Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to Prevent Foreign Animal Disease Incursion.

- 1.0 Background. The threat of Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) incursion into the United States is real. This threat is growing due to the continued globalization and vertical integration of the agricultural commodity marketplace. Furthermore, Foreign Animal Diseases are of greater concern today due to the specter of deliberate disease introduction by rogue nations or organizations intent on harming America. Recent FAD events in Taiwan (1997) and the United Kingdom (2001) clearly demonstrate that a destructive blow to an entire commodity market and other ancillary national economic components (e.g. tourism and transportation) can be delivered through FAD introduction. These events serve to underscore the value of a cadre of trained veterinarians to serve as national sentinels for the prevention of FAD incursion. These veterinarians must be highly trained in the early recognition and timely confirmation of FAD's in order to preserve our economic and national security.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responsible for ensuring the safety of all agricultural products produced and/or imported into the United States. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is charged with the mission of overseeing all agricultural products from the farm to various production centers located throughout the United States. Within USDA-APHIS, the Veterinary Services works in close cooperation with veterinarians throughout the U.S. to identify, interdict and prevent the spread of FAD.

USDA-APHIS coordinates the Veterinary Accreditation Program in cooperation with the 28 Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to certify veterinarians to perform various regulatory missions on behalf of the federal government. During the early 1990's, for cost savings reasons, the Veterinary Accreditation Program evolved from an examination-based scheme to more of an informal cooperative relationship between USDA and the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine. While this arrangement is cost effective, it is highly dependent upon a knowledgeable faculty and leadership team at each college to ensure that the original goals of this program are achieved. Unfortunately, there has been a high degree of turnover of faculty within each college that may have resulted in a shift away from the original goals and needs of the program. Furthermore, without a comprehensive periodic review, there is no effective means to assess the program or its content in the training veterinary students to recognize FAD and know the reporting requirements.

Recently, the Animal Health Safeguarding Review: Results and Recommendations (October 2001) addressed the need to "Redesign and upgrade the national veterinary accreditation program..." and to include "...the accreditation program to be the core for emergency preparedness and the response plan." Furthermore, Resolution Number 9 from the 1999 U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) meeting and Resolution Number 35 from the 2000 USAHA meeting identify concerns regarding the training of veterinary students in the recognition of FAD.

In light of current national events and the threat posed by FAD, USDA-APHIS believes that an immediate review of the current Veterinary Accreditation training process is needed and represents a cost effective first step toward improving our Nation's agricultural component of Homeland Security. Further, USDA-APHIS believes that this review must include all relevant FAD instruction underway at each College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) in the U.S. in order to provide the most accurate picture of the current status of veterinary training for the recognition of FAD. This is especially important because CVMs and clinicians are constant consultants to veterinarians across the U.S.

- 2.0 Objective. Conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of current Veterinary Accreditation training and relevant FAD instruction at each College of Veterinary Medicine in the United States and establish baseline data for the development of future training.
- 3.0 Approach. A clinical veterinarian from a College of Veterinary Medicine, under contract to

USDA-APHIS, will be ideally suited to conduct this review. The contract veterinarian will review and analyze existing FAD instructional training materials and techniques at each CVM and develop a proposal to improve the Veterinary Accreditation program through CVMs. The contract veterinarian will receive guidance from and follow a work plan established by a project steering committee comprised of one individual from each of the following categories: Area Veterinarian In-Charge (AVIC), State Veterinarian, the program manager for the National Veterinary Accreditation Program, a USDA-APHIS-VS Emergency Programs staff member, a member from the USAHA Foreign Animal Disease Committee, and the CVM clinician. The contract veterinarian will also involve the local AVIC and local State Veterinarian in contact with each CVM in the review.

4.0 Deliverables. All deliverables will be provided to the USDA-APHIS-VS Deputy Administrator.

4.1 The final product will be a written report that includes: a) a comprehensive inventory of all FAD instructional training materials and techniques at each College of Veterinary Medicine, b) identification of all Veterinary Accreditation resources required by each of the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and USDA-APHIS-VS, and c) a proposal consisting of a compilation of suggestions for improving the Veterinary Accreditation program through Colleges of Veterinary Medicine.

4.2 In addition to the final report, the contracted clinician will be required to provide written monthly reports indicating key activities and budget status throughout the 12 month period.

5.0 Period of Performance. This project will be completed within 12 months following the date of award.

6.0 Qualifications.

6.1 Basic Qualifications

- 6.1.1 Graduate of AVMA Accredited CVM
- 6.1.2 Currently employed by CVM, teaching clinical food animal medicine in a clinical environment
- 6.1.3 10+ years in academia
- 6.1.4 Advanced Degree, i.e., MS, PhD
- 6.1.5 AVMA recognized Board Certification relative to food animal medicine
- 6.1.6 Currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine with an active veterinary accreditation status
- 6.1.7 Currently active in the present CVM role in teaching veterinary accreditation
- 6.1.8 Concurrence of employer (CVM) to devote 12 months to project
- 6.1.9 Active involvement with USDA-APHIS and FAD awareness, emergency management (READEO), and/or participation in contracts with USDA, i.e., FMD in the UK

7.0 Selection Criteria – Announcement of intent to contract clinical veterinarians will be provided to 28 CVMs with three week response required for nomination of clinicians. Applications must include reference to each of the qualifications listed above. Applications will be reviewed by a committee selected by the VSMT representative on Veterinary Accreditation issues of the Safeguarding review, with final selection for the position made by the aforementioned VSMT representative on Veterinary Accreditation issues, with concurrence by the VS Deputy Administrator.

8.0 Anticipated Cost to Complete. USDA-APHIS anticipates that the cost to complete this review will be approximately \$200,000.00 which includes the cost of travel and per diem to every CVM for both the clinician and the associated AVIC and State Veterinarian, the clinician's salary for one year, and covers the cost of automated data processing (ADP) equipment and report preparation costs.

8.1 Cost breakdown

- 8.1.1 Salary and benefits - \$94,000
- 8.1.2 Travel - \$63,000
- 8.1.3 Administrative support (salary and benefits) - \$15,000

8.1.4 Administrative support, overhead, and equipment costs - \$28,000

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